Request of Indian Sugar Mills Association

†3066. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Sugar Mills Association has requested Government to intervene to save the distressed sugar industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the policy followed by Government in this matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) to (c) Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA) submit representations to the Government, from time to time, on various issues relating to sugar industry. These representations are duly considered and appropriate decisions taken thereon.

Foodgrains for Below Poverty Line people

3067. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the percentage of people living below the poverty line in the country;

(b) the steps taken by Government to eliminate poverty in the country;

(c) whether, in view of so much surplus supplies of rice, foodgrains and sugar in the country there is any scheme to supply these items at nominal prices to people below the poverty line through public distribution system; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) As per the poverty estimates of Planning Commission for the year 1999-2000, the percentage of poverty in the country is 26.10% (30-day-Recall period).

(b) The following programmes of the Government are aimed at eliminating poverty in the country :—

†Original notice of" the question was received in Hindi.